

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): An information playback apparatus comprising:
a first acquisition unit configured to acquire contents from an information storage medium;

a second acquisition unit configured to acquire expansion information from at least one of the information storage medium and an external apparatus via a communication line;

a storage unit configured to store the expansion information acquired by the second acquisition unit in accordance with a type of the expansion information;

a control unit configured to control input of the expansion information to the storage unit and output of the expansion information from the storage unit; and

a playback unit configured to play back the contents acquired by the first acquisition unit, and to play back the expansion information stored in the storage unit in synchronism with playback of the contents,

wherein each of segmented memory spaces of the storage unit stores a plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information which form a first type of expansion information on the basis of input control by the control unit when the first type of expansion information is to be stored, the first type of expansion information stored in the storage unit being output on the basis of output control by the control unit,

the segmented memory spaces of the storage unit are integrated to store a second type of expansion information on the basis of input control by the control unit when the second type of expansion information is to be stored, the second type of expansion information stored in the storage unit being output on the basis of output control by the control unit,

the contents contain predetermined playback information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one segmented expansion information,
one segmented expansion information contains header information and main body
expansion information,

the header information contains time information, and

the playback unit plays back predetermined main body expansion information on the
basis of the time information contained in the header information of the segmented expansion
information in synchronism with playback of predetermined playback information contained
in the contents.

Claims 2-6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): An information playback method comprising:
acquiring expansion information from at least one of an information storage medium
and an external apparatus via a communication line;

storing, in a storage unit, the expansion information in accordance with a type of
information; and

playing back the contents acquired from the information storage medium, and playing
back the expansion information stored in the storage unit in synchronism with playback of the
contents,

wherein each of segmented memory spaces of the storage unit stores a plurality of
pieces of segmented expansion information which form a first type of expansion information
when the first type of expansion information is to be stored,

the segmented memory spaces of the storage unit are integrated to store a second type
of expansion information when the second type of expansion information is to be stored,

the contents contain predetermined playback information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one segmented expansion information, one segmented expansion information contains header information and main body expansion information,

the header information contains time information, and

playing back includes playing back predetermined main body expansion information on the basis of the time information contained in the header information of the segmented expansion information in synchronism with playback of predetermined playback information contained in the contents.

Claim 8-13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first and second types of expansion information need not always be output at the same time.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 7, wherein the first and second types of expansion information need not always be output at the same time.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An information playback apparatus comprising:
a first acquisition unit configured to acquire contents from an information storage medium;

a second acquisition unit configured to acquire expansion information from at least one of the information storage medium and an external apparatus via a communication line;

a storage unit configured to store the expansion information acquired by the second acquisition unit in accordance with a type of the expansion information; and

a playback unit configured to play back the contents acquired by the first acquisition unit, and to play back the expansion information stored in the storage unit in synchronism with playback of the contents,

wherein the storage unit is a ring buffer, a start address and an end address of a storage area of the ring buffer are adjacent to each other, and when data are recorded in sequence in the ring buffer, oldest data in the ring buffer is overwritten by new data, and

the playback unit causes a playback of the contents and the expansion information to pause when acquisition of the expansion information is delayed.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): An information playback method comprising:
acquiring expansion information from at least one of an information storage medium and an external apparatus via a communication line;

storing, in a storage unit, the expansion information in accordance with a type of information; and

playing back the contents acquired from the information storage medium, and playing back the expansion information stored in the storage unit in synchronism with playback of the contents,

wherein the storage unit is a ring buffer, a start address and an end address of a storage area of the ring buffer are adjacent to each other, and when data are recorded in sequence in the ring buffer, oldest data in the ring buffer is overwritten by new data, and

the playback unit causes a playback of the contents and the expansion information to pause when acquisition of the expansion information is delayed.

Claim 18 (New): An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the playback unit causes a playback of the contents and the expansion information to pause when acquisition of the expansion information is delayed.

Claim 19 (New): A method according to claim 7, wherein the playback unit causes a playback of the contents and the expansion information to pause when acquisition of the expansion information is delayed.